(a) whether Government is cognizant of the recent resolution passed by the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC);

(b) whether it is a fact that the resolution reflects an organisations's stand on Jammu and Kashmir;

(c) the details thereof;

(d) whether Government has taken up the issue with the OIC and its members bilaterally; and

(e) if so, the details of the responses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SHASHI THAROOR): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c) The Hon'ble member is probably referring to the recent resolution passed by OIC in their Final Communique of the Annual Coordination Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the OIC Member States held in New York on September 25, 2009 on the sidelines of 64th session of UN General Assembly. It reflects their overtly one sided and India-adverse position on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir.

(d) and (e) Yes. The matter is invariably raised at bilateral level and in meetings with group of OIC member States.

The Government of India has issued a strong rebuttal in response to the OIC resolution stating that "It is regrettable that the OIC has commented on India's internal affairs. We condemn and reject this. Inherent in OIC's statements and actions on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir is a complete inability to understand India's position. Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and it is our firm position that the OIC has no locus standi in matters concerning India's internal affairs."

Indians attacked in Australia

†786. PROF. P.J. KURIEN:
DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians attacked in Australia during the last year and the number of persons who died or injured in such incidents;

(b) the number of people arrested in this regard and the number of people against whom action has been taken;

(c) whether despite the assurance from Government of Australia attacks are still going on; and

(d) the substantial arrangement made for the security of the migrants and students studying in Australia?

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) The number of Indians attacked in Australia during 2008 and 2009 are given below:—

(i) 2008 : 17

(ii) 2009 : 94
(upto 20th November 2009)

No Indian died in any of these attacks. Majority suffered minor injuries.

(b) Figures of the exact number of people arrested in this regard are not available. However, it is reported that 7 people received convictions, after being held guilty and responsible for some of these attacks.

(c) Reports of some stray incidents of attacks continue to be received from Melbourne.

(d) As a result of a series of discussions with visiting high level Australian delegations and demarches made by Indian Mission/Posts in Australia, the Australian Government has taken various steps. They have announced a series of measures, including stricter policing in Victoria and NSW, aimed at ensuring the safety and security of Indian students in Australia. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Ms. Julia Gillard introduced in the Parliament an Amendment Bill to the ESOS Act, 2000, under which all educational institutions will be required to re-register under new and tighter criteria by 31 December, 2010. Similarly rapid audit of service providers is being undertaken by the Australian authorities, as a result of which some colleges have already been de-registered and shut down. These steps have been useful and the incidence of attacks has decreased.

Haj quota to private tour operators

787. SHRI MOHAMMED ADEEB:
SHRI SABIR ALI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the basis of distribution and release of Government Haj quota and additional Haj quota this year to private tour operators; and

(b) the steps that are being taken to make it more rational and transparent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SHASHI THAROOR): (a) The distribution of PTOs quota for Haj-2009 was done as per the following policy:—

(i) All the old PTOs who got quota in 2008 and had been found eligible for allocation of quota this year also, have been allocated quota of minimum 50 seats provided their quota allocation during 2008 was 50 seats or more.

(ii) Those PTOs who are applying since last three Haj seasons but no quota was allocated to them last year, have been allocated a quota of minimum 50 seats provided they were otherwise eligible.